European Parliament: amending the decision of the 4 June 2003 adopting the Members' Statute

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The committee adopted the own-initiative report by its chairman, Giuseppe GARGANI (EPP-ED, IT), on amending the decision of 4 June 2003 on the adoption of the Statute for Members of the European Parliament. MEPs in the committee supported the compromise proposed by the Council.

Under the proposed agreement, the monthly salary for all MEPs would be fixed at 38.5% of the basic salary of a judge at the Court of Justice (i.e. EUR 7 000). This would put an end to the pay disparities between Members, who currently receive the same salaries as members of their national parliaments. Under the new system, MEPs' salaries would be paid by the EU. They would pay income tax to the EU budget, though Member States also retain the option to apply in addition taxation up to the level of national rates.

The agreement provides for a transition period during which each Member State may continue to apply, for the Members elected by its citizens, rules different from the provisions of the Statute.

Upon introduction of the Statute, travel expenses would no longer be refunded on a flat-rate basis. Instead, all MEPs would have their expenses reimbursed on the basis of actual costs incurred, thus improving transparency. Members would enter a common pension scheme, with contributions paid by Parliament.

In its report, the committee called for "a separate and independent examination of that part of the Statute which falls under secondary law and of that part which falls under primary law, and approval of both parts in accordance with the institutional provisions applicable to each of them". It pointed out that, regarding the part which falls under primary law, Member States should review the 1965 Protocol on the privileges and immunities of the European Communities in respect of the provisions relating to MEPs, "taking the Statute approved on 3 and 4 June 2003 as a model".